FFA LEADERSHIP FOR AMERICA

South Carolina's

Young Farmer & FFA

Magazine

SUPPORT AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

Vol.44 No.1 25 cents Jan/Feb 1994

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FRANK R. STOVER
BOX 52
PELION, SC 29123

(L-R) SCVATA President Chris Edge and Dr. Dale Law prepare to divide the group of educators into their respective teams and task forces to tackle the issues surrounding state ag ed programs.

The "Twelve-Month Agriculture Programs" team, headed by Greg Vaught (far right), meets to discuss and examine ag programs involving extended summer contracts.

- New Ag Ed Associate -

at the Office of Occupational Education on September 1, 1993, and outlined his 23 + years of experience in the field of agriculture. With an extensive educational background that encompasses three degrees in agricultural education, including a Doctorate from the University of Illinois, Dr. Law's knowledge of ag ed curriculum, teaching methodology, and technology earned him a list of credentials including Assistant Professor of Agricultural Education in the College of Agriculture at the University of Illinois, Executive Secretary for the Illinois Leaders in Agriculture, Assistant Head of Vocational Agricultural Service at the University of Illinois, and more.

Addressing the group with his highly motivational speech entitled "Making The Connections", Dr. Law presented his goals for developing the needs of ag ed in South Carolina and providing strong leadership to both the field of agriculture and education. He also urged both the educators and the administrators to utilize the time, knowledge, and resources of individuals and businesses throughout the community to further the direction of ag ed. After outlining current challenges to ag ed and methods through which they could be overcome, Dr. Law turned the podium over to a reaction panel comprised of Chris Edge, President of the South Carolina Vocational Agricultural Teachers Association, David Nixon, President of the South Carolina FFA Association, and Dr. Lloyd Blanton, Professor at Clemson University for their remarks and feedback to the evening's discussion.

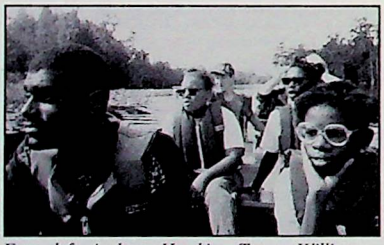
Nearing the end of the meeting, the group of educators separated into seven teams to discuss particular areas of importance to the continual and future success of agricultural education and submit recommendations to the state Office of Occupational Education. The evening closed with a "multimedia technology in agricultural education" demonstration sponsored by the South Carolina Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association.

Adventuresome Spirit Grasps Aiken FFA

Attending the Sunbelt Agricultural Exposition in Moultrie, Georgia has been an annual event for Aiken FFA Chapter Advisor Joe Wilson and his chapter members for over 12 years. However, this year he and his group decided to encounter a new experience and add a tour of the Okeefenokee Swamp to their plans as well.

Funding the trip with money raised from the sale of plants grown in their three greenhouses at Aiken High School, the group traveled first to the Ag Expo on October 19 where they spent the entire day viewing exhibits, field demonstrations, and livestock - the most amazing of which involved an actual ostrich display!

Commenting on the annual tradition of attending the Expo, Wilson said, "I think the students benefit from any exposure to an ag-related display of this magnitude, although it is impossible to see everything in one day."



From left: Anthony Hawkins, Teresa Williams, Curtis Morris, Ms. Adria Singletary, Jennifer Lewis, and Shufondra Quattlebaum enjoy their ride through the parkway.

Aiken FFA'ers take a quick break from the exhibits to pose for a picture.

FFA member Curtis Morris thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to learn more about the hay business, which he has already become involved in with his grandfather, and he especially liked the chance to test drive a new dual-wheel Ford tractor. And while the rest of his group toured the show on the ground, fellow FFA member Anthony Hawkins was overhead taking advantage of plane rides that were being offered above the Expo! "It was great just seeing all the different things," stated Teresa Williams.

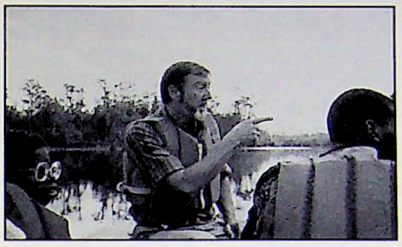
After spending the night in Hahira, Georgia, the group headed to the nearby town of Fargo for their tour of the legendary Okeefenokee Swamp. "None of us had ever been in the swamp so we had no knowledge of how we would go in or what we would do," remarked Wilson.

- Continued on page 5 -

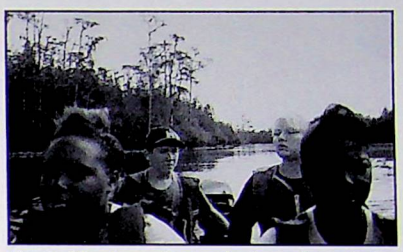
- *Adventuresome* -

However, after a few well placed inquiries they arrived at the Stephen C. Foster State Park where they rented a boat in which to take their tour. Surprised to find that they could go out alone in the 16 foot boat without a guide, the students were a bit reluctant to strike out on the journey with Ms. Adria Singletary and Mr. Wilson as their only "guides". But after assurances from the park ranger that they would have no problems, the group was on its way.

In their one hour ride through the swamp, Wilson and his group saw over 200 alligators and a number of different waterfowl! Safe and sound back in Aiken, FFA members Shufondra Quattlebaum and Jennifer Lewis agreed that the swamp and the alligators were the best part of the trip.



Chapter Advisor Joe Wilson directs the tour of the Okeefenokee Swamp.



Curtis Morris navigates the boat through the swamp as Teresa Williams, Ms. Adria Singletary, and Jennifer Lewis try to spot the alligators.

February Kicks Off National FFA Week

More than 417,000 FFA members will promote FFA, agricultural education and the food and fiber industry during National FFA Week, Feb. 1926, 1994. FFA members in 7,545 chapters across the U.S. as well as Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands will be organizing events and activities to foster awareness of agricultural education and support for FFA.

This year's theme, "FFA Leadership for America," will be seen through communities nationwide through promotional efforts of local members. FFA activities and agriculture classes emphasize leadership skills, analytical thinking and the application of both to the industry of agriculture.

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Competition Like De ja Vu for

What's On Your Mind?

Be a part of...

South Carolina's **Young Farmer & FFA** Magazine

by submitting articles, photographs (black and white), ideas, thoughts, points of view and bits of information to:

Laura Johnson
Young Farmers & FFA Magazine
One Harbison Way, Suite 105
Columbia, SC 29212

Please keep submissions typed and under 500 words.
Include name and phone number.

participated in the same public speaking contest at the national convention in 1992 with a speech entitled "Deregulation and Its Potential Impact on Agriculture".

Although Benenhaly and French both represented Hillcrest High School the state level, he also received $350 towards his trip to Kansas City, as well as a trophy. French, who is currently a business major at Coker College, plans to continue to utilize his public speaking abilities by attending law school after completing his undergraduate studies.

More To Come!

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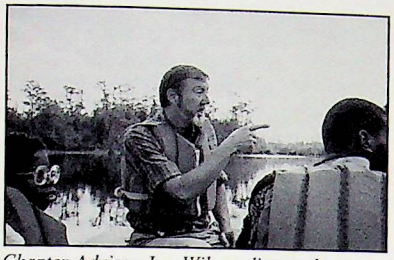

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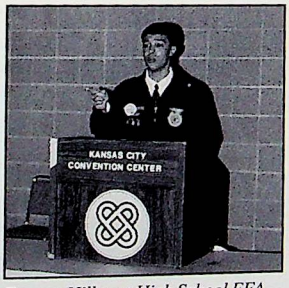
Curtis Morris navigates the boat through the swamp as Teresa Williams, Ms. Adria Singletary, and Jennifer Lewis try to spot the alligators.

Competition Like De ja Vu for Hillcrest FFA Chapter

Following the same path as a prior Hillcrest FFA member just one year before, Hillcrest FFA member Jefferey French competed in and advanced to the semi-finals of the national Prepared Public Speaking contest at the 1993 convention in Kansas City, Missouri. For advisor Billy Keels, who accompanied both students throughout their competitions, it must have really felt like he'd been there before!



Former Hillcrest High School FFA member Jefferey French practices for the national Prepared Public Speaking contest in Kansas City.

French, who delivered a speech entitled "Bio-Technology - Feeding Our Planet", was following in the footsteps of not only a fellow alumni, but of his own cousin, Brian Benenhaly. Benenhaly participated in the same public speaking contest at the national convention in 1992 with a speech entitled "Deregulation and Its Potential Impact on Agriculture".

Although Benenhaly and French both represented Hillcrest High School and the state of South Carolina on the national level, the advancement process had changed somewhat by the time French competed.

In addition to the state competition, a tri-state competition had also previously been held between Tennessee, Georgia, and South Carolina. However, by the time French advanced in '93, that round had been eliminated and he progressed from the state competition directly to the quarter-finals at the national convention in Missouri where he then advanced to the semi-finals only to lose to the eventual national winner. For winning at the state level, he also received $350 towards his trip to Kansas City, as well as a trophy. French, who is currently a business major at Coker College, plans to continue to utilize his public speaking abilities by attending law school after completing his undergraduate studies.

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Larry Case, National FFA advisor, said today's young people are aware of their responsibilities as agricultural leaders for tomorrow. "Our members realize the world in which we live is growing larger and more interdependent," he said. "These young people will be leading the effort to provide food and fiber for a growing population, as well as to keep America competitive in the global marketplace.

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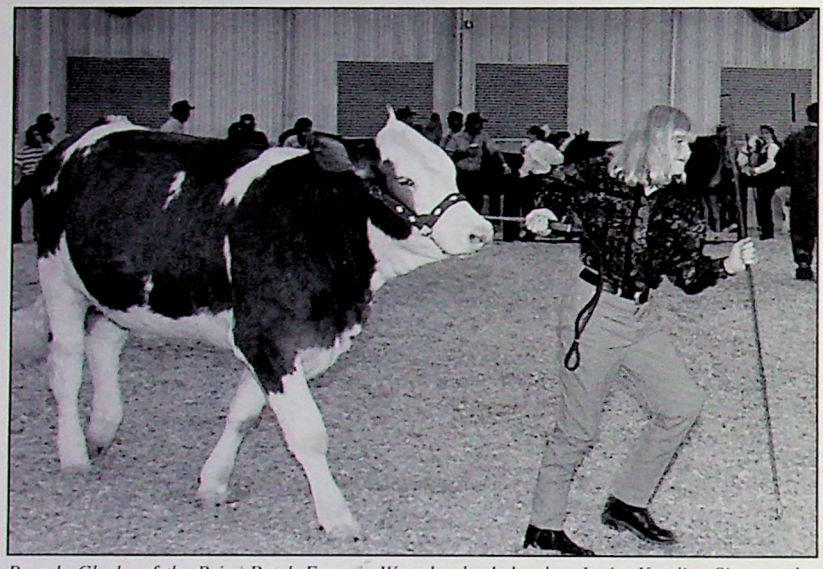
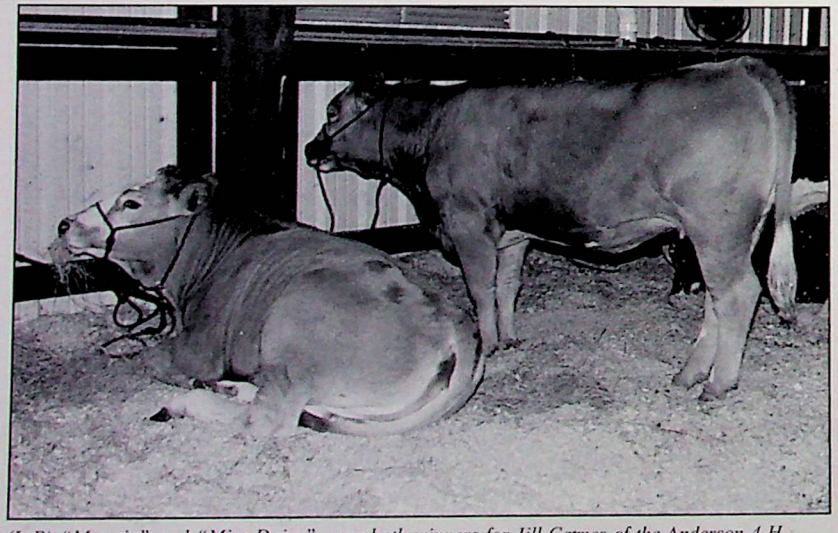
Driving Miss Daisy... Literally!

Learning how to drive takes on a whole new meaning for students of all ages at this event held in Columbia, South Carolina each fall. Every year, the South Carolina State Fair brings with it not only the chance to brave wild rides and gorge on junk food, but also the opportunity for many young men and women to demonstrate their livestock raising and handling abilities for state judges and fair-goers from all over the South.



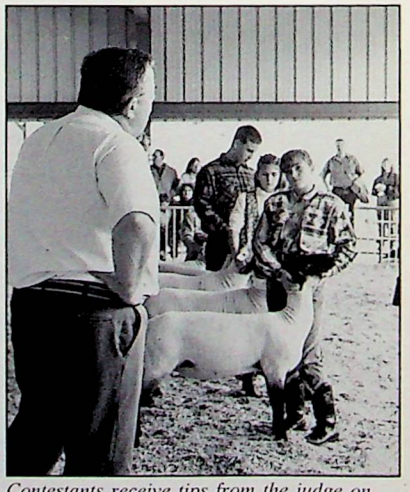
Brandy Clarke of the Briar Patch Farm in Waterloo leads her late Junior Yearling Simmental cow around the arena for the judge to observe.



(L-R) "Maggie" and "Miss Daisy" were both winners for Jill Carnes of the Anderson 4-H Club.

The contests, which provide an excellent opportunity for FFA'ers and future FFA'ers to demonstrate their ag-related talents, cover categories ranging from swine, sheep, and horses, to beef, market lambs, and dairy goats. Participants are judged on everything from livestock grooming and presentation to showmanship and handling, also known as "driving" the animal.

After competing in the appropriate age categories, usually Junior Showmen for youth 14 and under and Senior Showmen for youth 14 and over, the Junior and Senior champions "face-off" to determine who will become the State Grand Champion for their division. Winners receive ribbons, trophies and even prize money as reward for their hard work, which often involves years of training and preparation. Spring Valley High School senior Sabin Cranford works year-round with the Yorkshire pigs that he raises on his grandmother's farm in Florence, South Carolina to perfect his handling and showmanship techniques. At the fair with nine of his hogs, Sabin won second place in the Swine Show/Senior Showmanship Division.

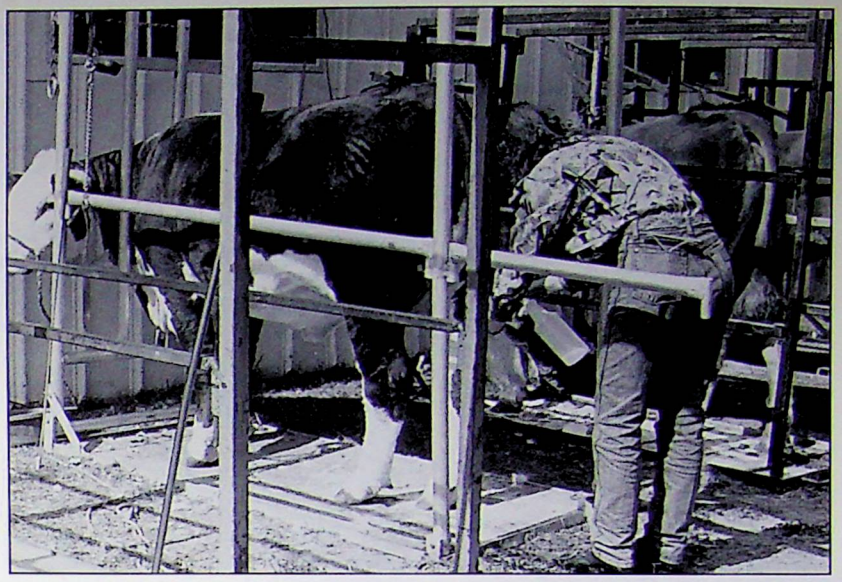


Contestants receive tips from the judge on the strengths and weaknesses of their showmanship abilities.

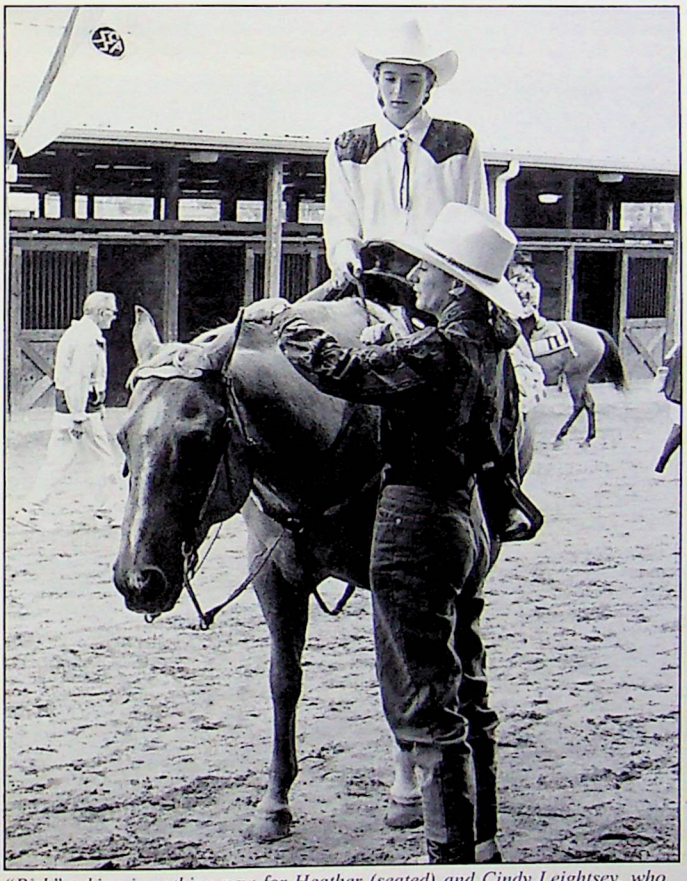
Many FFA Chapters are often represented at the fair, as was the case with Crescent High School, whose members participated in the Jr. Beef Show competition. Tonya Simpson, a 12th-grader at Crescent, took home first place in the Early Summer Yearling Class with Miss Maybelle, a Polled Hereford cow, and seventh place in the Senior Yearling class with Ascend Forcette, also a Polled Hereford.

Another FFA'er, Jill Carnes, traveled from Anderson, South Carolina to show her cows in the Junior English and Continental Beef division. Placing second in the Senior Showmanship division, Carnes also captured a second, third, and fourth place ribbon with her yearlings.

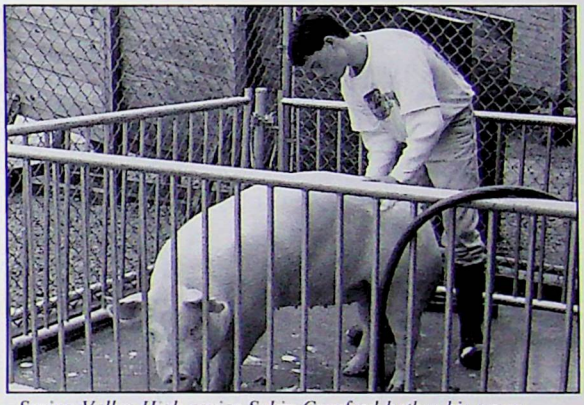
No matter what category they competed in, or whether or not they placed, all of these youth are winners as far as the FFA and agricultural community are concerned.



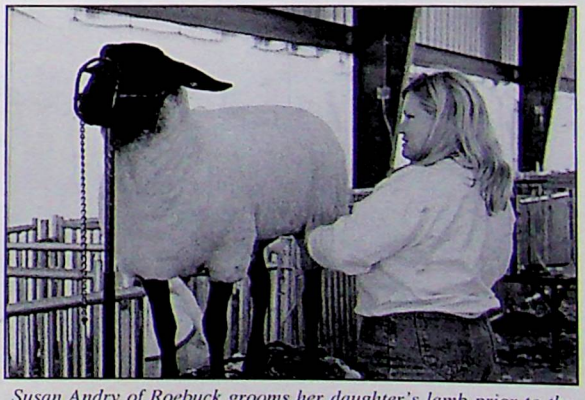
Crescent High FFA'er Tonya Simpson works to brush the hairspray out of her cow's tail after a competition.



"Risk" taking is nothing new for Heather (seated) and Cindy Leightsey, who await the "Youth Western Go-As-You-Please" category in the Youth Open Horse Show.



Spring Valley High senior Sabin Cranford bathes his seven-month old Yorkshire pig prior to the Senior Showmanship Contest.



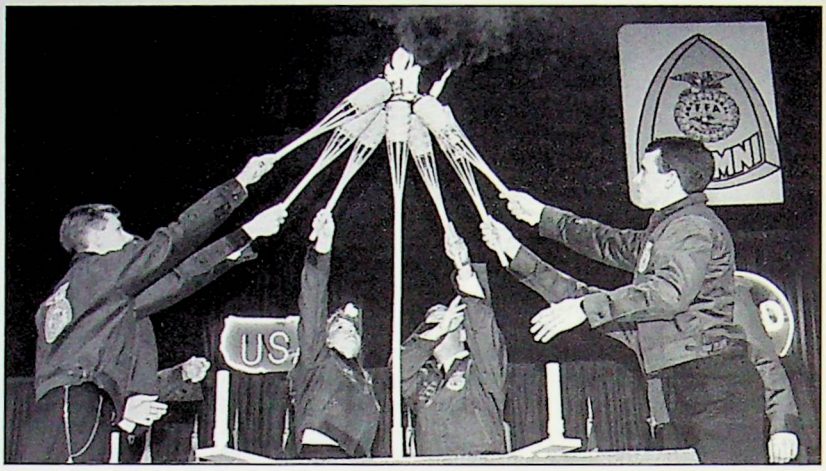
Susan Andry of Roebuck grooms her daughter's lamb prior to the showmanship contest for the Yearling Ewe class.

National Convention To South Car

With a list of guest speakers that exemplified its "Leadership for America" theme, the 1993 National FFA Convention, held November 10-14, kicked off the opening night of its annual week of leadership seminars, contests, and awards ceremonies with a patriotic performance by country music singer Lee Greenwood. Inspiring the record-breaking crowd of 31,583 with his words and music, including his popular hit song,"God Bless The USA", Greenwood joined the ranks of such distinguished personalities as Miss America Kimberly Clarice Aiken, Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy, Senator Larry Craig, and CNN reporter John Holliman in entertaining the crowd during convention sessions.

Each year, approximately 300 FFA members from all over South Carolina join fellow FFA members from around the United States (including chapters from Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands) in Kansas City to experience the world's largest annual student gathering and to develop their leadership skills. With some South Carolina members having endured 20-hour bus rides, while others enjoyed much less harrowing plane trips, they all eventually reunited at the Howard Johnson Convention Center and Hotel where they settled in for a week of exciting and exhausting festivities!

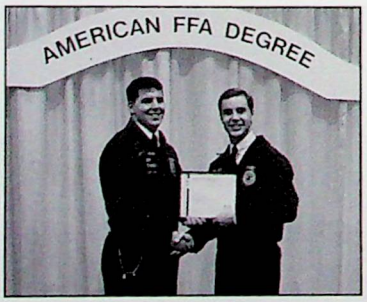
In addition to a hectic schedule of seminars, convention sessions, and speaking engagements, the students also had many opportunities throughout the week to visit the FFA Career Show and the FFA Shopping Mall. At the career fair, students visited exhibits and met with literally hundreds of representatives from agriculture-related associations and corporations to discuss both educational



Concluding their installation by collectively lighting the torch, the new 1993-1994 National FFA Officer Team closed the final convention session on Saturday.

The Golden Ox restaurant in Kansas City, reknowned for its excellent steaks, was a relaxing stop for Dr. Dale Law and crew at the end of a hectic week.

The National FFA Band, comprised of members from every state, performed regularly throughout the convention.

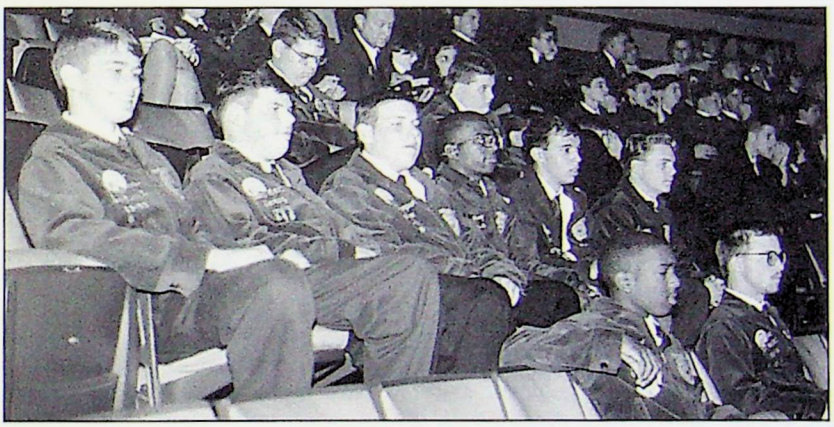


State FFA Vice-President Warren Larrimore was one of several American FFA Degree recipients from South Carolina.

Britton's Neck Advisor and National Parliamentary Procedure Judge Jerry Pace reviews notes with another judge during a break in the contest finals.

n Proves Rewarding
olina FFA'ers

Advisor Dreyfus Williams and his Furman-Manchester FFA students receive a Silver BOAC Award for the second straight year.



Billy Keels' Hillcrest-Dalzell chapter awaits the start of the Fifth General Session activities.

and career opportunities. Many exhibitors sponsored contests and giveaways as well to entertain FFA'ers and test their ag knowledge! Located adjacent to the Career Show was the FFA Shopping Mall which featured shops and stores full of FFA merchandise, chapter supplies, and convention souvenirs. Between these two, it was virtually impossible to leave Kansas City empty-handed!

Offering more in the way of thrills and excitement was Kansas City's ever popular American Royal Rodeo which, for its 66th year, sponsored rodeo performances and daily concerts with country music stars like Restless Heart, Highway 101, and the Gibson Miller Band.

However, in addition to enjoying the wide variety of activities available for enjoyment, South Carolina FFA members were also hard at work competing in national contests and receiving both individual and chapter recognition awards. Jefferey French, of Hillcrest-Dalzell, represented his chapter in the National Prepared Public Speaking Contest where he progressed as far as the semi-finals. Aiken High School FFA had their own "celebrity" in the form of Jamie Lewis, who was chosen as a tenor in the just-under-100-member National FFA Chorus that performed throughout the convention sessions. And while Britton's Neck was patiently awaiting the opportunity to accept a Silver BOAC Award, their advisor, Jerry Pace, was keeping busy as one of three judges for the National Parliamentary Procedure Contest. No matter what the capacity, these South Carolina FFA'ers and many others made a remarkable impact during the week.

- Continued on page 10 -

A teenager herself, Miss America Kimberly Clarice Aiken, delivered a motivational speech to her peers on opening night.

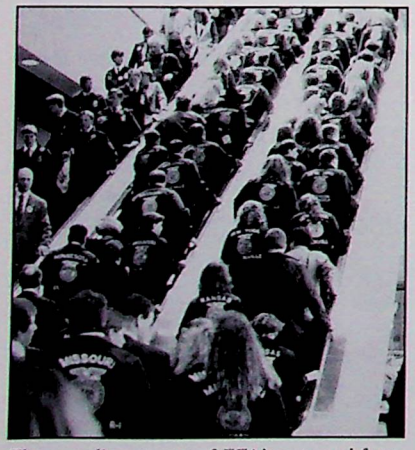
Left: Lynn Hicks of Lexington ATC, a member of South Carolina's Floriculture Team, prepares to take the written exam in the national contest.

Ford Motor Company provided some unique versions of their automobiles for the career fair.

- Convention -

The conclusion of the week's activities brought with it the announcement of the newly 1993-94 National FFA Officer Team. They are as follows: Curtis Childers of Nemo, TX, President; Andrew McCrea of Maysville, MO, Secretary; Raquel Lacey of Nokomis, IL, Central Region Vice-President; Liam Brody of Greenville, NY, Eastern Region Vice-President; and Steven Mitchell of Pineville, AR, Southern Region Vice-President. Keep an eye out for these new leaders, because in just one year they will each travel over 200,000 miles promoting FFA and visiting chapters. In addition to awards, souvenirs, new friendships, and lots of memories, South Carolina FFA'ers returned to their homes with a renewed spirit of pride and determination that can only be found in the FFA!

Country music singer Lee Greenwood entertains the crowd during the opening session of the convention.



The unending stream of FFA'ers to and from the FFA Food Court and FFA Shopping Mall was a daily sight at the convention hall.

Leadership for America
1993 National FFA Convention
Award Winners

NATIONAL OFFICER CANDIDATE
Lee Mayfield

NATIONAL FFA CHORUS MEMBER
Jamie Lewis-Tenor 2 [Aiken]

AMERICAN FFA DEGREE RECIPIENTS
Warren Larrimore [Gresham]
Kimberly Reason [Gresham]
Neal F. Gore III [Loris]
Gregory S. Harrelson [Loris]
Samuel L. Barrett [West Columbia]
William J. Yonce [Aiken]

NATIONAL CHAPTER AWARDS
McBee (Silver)
Crescent (Bronze)
Travelers Rest (Bronze)

BOAC AWARDS
Britton's Neck (Silver)
Lexington Technology Center (Silver)
Furman Manchester (Bronze)
Loris (Bronze)

CHAPTER SAFETY AWARDS
Berea (Bronze)
Furman-Manchester (Bronze)
Pleasant Hill (Bronze)
(Bronze)
Chad Warren
Tommy Harmon, Advisor

FLORICULTURE
Lexington Applied Technology Center (Bronze)
Lynn Hicks (Silver)
Jason Chavis

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE
Latta High School
Jamie Hyatt
Tim Jacobs
Kitty Hunt
Seneca Baines
Reggie Clark
Kelly Huggins
Keith Cox, Advisor

PREPARED PUBLIC SPEAKING
Jefferey French - Semi-finalist [Hillcrest]

NURSERY/LANDSCAPE
Fort Mill (Bronze)
Christie Patterson (Silver)
Corey Watson (Bronze)
Shawn Bagwell
Sam Blankenship
Mark Wyndham, Advisor

AG MECHANICS
Hillcrest/Fountain Inn (Silver)
John Workman (Gold)
Kevin Tollison (Silver)
Brad Willis (Bronze)
Jame Coble
Clark Woods, Advisor

FORESTRY
Ware Shoals (Bronze)
Brannon Babb (Silver)
Rafe Gambrell (Silver)
Jeff Falkingham
Brooks Jackson
Donnie Garrett, Advisor

LIVESTOCK
Wagener-Salley
Todd Beak (Bronze)
Lillie Rushton (Bronze)
Mandi Yon
Rachelle Jackson
Allen Williams, Advisor

FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
Britton's Neck (Bronze)
David Price (Silver)
Burnie Bell, Jr. (Bronze)
Bobby Richardson (Bronze)
Lance Robertson (Bronze)
Jerry Pace, Advisor

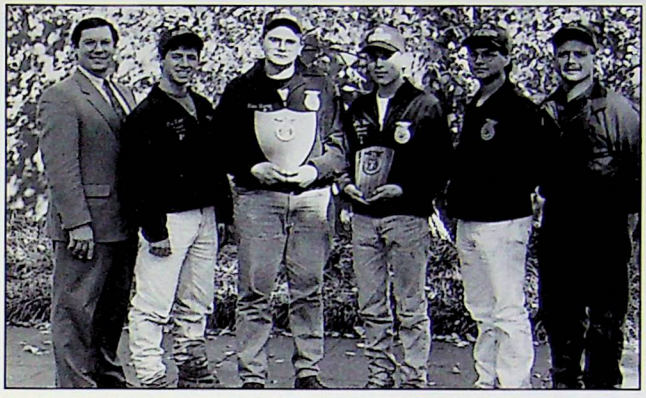
COMPUTERS IN AGRICULTURE
Matthew B. Vermillion [Belton]
Lisa White [Cheraw]

ACHIEVEMENT IN VOLUNTEERISM AWARD
Jason Bolin [Lexington]

Lexington High School Captures State Soil Judging Title

Saturday, November 6, 1993 marked the arrival of the 39th Annual South Carolina FFA Soil Identification and Land Treatment Meet at Clemson University in Clemson, South Carolina. Compared to the winter snowstorm which caught meet participants by surprise last year, this unusually warm indian-summer day provided the perfect stage for the competition involving twenty FFA soil judging teams from around the state.

After meeting bright and early on campus at the agriculture department for registration and orientation, the teams, consisting of four members each, piled into buses and traveled through nearby Pendleton, South Carolina to Clemson University's Simpson Agricultural Experiment Station to begin work. Rotating between four pre-determined test sites, the teams utilized analytical skills obtained both in and out of the classroom to determine treatment processes that would allow for optimum use of the land.



1993-1994 State Soil Judging Champs - Lexington High School: (L-R) Von Snelgrove of the S.C. Land Resources Commission, Chad Warren, Kleck Harmon, Barry Rewis, H.L. Branham, and advisor Tommy

Second place, State Soil Judging Competition - Pelion High School: (L-R) Craig Mullis, Scott Gantt, Michael Burton, Corey Rish, advisor Frank Stover, Jr., and Chris Driggers of SCE & G.

Upon completion of each site's score card, the group returned to the university for a hot, barbecue lunch and to await the awards ceremony. Bringing in the top score of 599 out of a possible 720 points, the team from Lexington High School, led by advisor Tommy Harmon, took first place in the competition. Team members were Chad Warren, Kleck Harmon, H.L. Branham, and Barry Rewis. And running a very close second, with a total of 596 points was Pelion High School, also of Lexington County. Both teams received plaques and $1,200 toward expenses to the national competition in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma in the spring for their efforts.

Corey Rish and Craig Mullis, both of the Pelion chapter, captured first and second place respectively for outstanding individual scores. Rish, with a score of 207 out of a possible 240 points, received $450 towards his trip to the National FFA Convention held in November 1993 in Kansas City, Missouri, while his counterpart received an engraved gold watch for tallying 205 points.

Top district winners also received plaques, and they were: Travelers Rest (District I), Lexington Chapter (District II), Britton's Neck (District III), and Ridge Spring-Monetta (District IV).

Annual sponsors and this year's representatives of the event included Craig DeBrew, of Carolina Power and Light Company, Dwight Moore and Davey McDowell of Duke Power Company, Chris Driggers of South Carolina Electric and Gas, the South Carolina Conservation Districts Foundation, the South Carolina Association of Conservation Districts, and the South Carolina Soil Conservation Service.

FFA'ers get down and dirty to analyze the soil properties of the land.

Team members get to work measuring the thickness of the topsoil at Site #1.

unencumbered access to information to those seeking it.

There are several implications to this statement. One is that no matter how good your education was at Clemson or somewhere else, you must keep on learning or your programs and curricula will quickly become obsolete.

As professionals who want to provide the kind of top-notch, high quality, high impact science, technology, and entrepreneurship programs in agriculture demanded by our clients and customers in the 1990's, we must make the connections with leaders and information generators in the field of agribusiness. We must have an understanding of the potential job market, where the demand areas are, and the essential skills necessary to be successful in those areas. This information will then provide a solid foundation for developing up-to-date curricula and other relevant program efforts.

I believe we need several major paradigm shifts in ag education as we approach the 21st century. What's a paradigm? A paradigm is simply a model or way of looking at something. All of us see our world through a certain lens that has developed over time as a result of our experiences and training. When we shift our paradigm, we are simply looking at something from a different angle—because we have new information, facts, figures, understandings.

The FIRST paradigm shift we need to make is in how we see the industry of agriculture. Even though over 20% of America's workforce are employed in some phase of the agricultural industry, only about 7.5 % of that 20% are employed in production agriculture, or in other words, on the farm.

Over 90% of the jobs are in off-farm positions such as marketing, merchandising and sales (32.4%); scientists, engineers and related professionals (28.8%); managers and financial specialists (14.%); social service professionals (9.7%); and education and communication (7.6%).

Does your local ag program reflect the industry it's designed to serve? Does your curricula include concepts and skills needed by today's workers? Is it designed to teach skills needed in the future? If not, you'll have a hard time selling your program to potential clients, customers and taxpayers.

A SECOND necessary paradigm shift, is for us to take a pro-active position more effectively reaching out to the agribusiness world we serve— and form partnership teams with them. I don't mean just to be pressure groups for us, but to ask them what we can do for them. As we make the connections with local agribusiness leaders in our communities, we'll gain a better understanding of how dramatically the real world of work has changed in the last few years.

Case in point! A recent news release from American Cyanamid announced its acquisition of all of Shell Companies crop protection products and marketing activities including manufacturing sites in Brazil, biosciences research facilities in Germany, and formulation plants in France. Cyanamid promotes itself as a research based life sciences company which discovers and develops medical, AGRICULTURAL, and chemical products. Cyanamid is a customer of yours—hiring the product you produce—your graduates.

Connections with agricultural industry leads me to believe we need to move quickly to enhance our presence in several areas. One is the area of Environmental Sciences and Natural Resources Management. The general population is very interested in the environment right now, we should position ourselves to take advantage of that interest including programs in forestry, wildlife, aquaculture, conservation, etc. (Every high school in SC is required to offer a course in Environmental Science; listed as an elective in either natural sciences or social sciences; and ag teachers with a Type 30 certificate are qualified to teach that course; why would I want to teach that course?; what better recruiting opportunity do you have in your school for the rest of your ag program than to be exposed to students taking this course?)

I see a need to increase our emphasis in the area of Food Science and Technology. Food processing is big business and its agribusiness. Several states have developed new curricula in Food Science; Clemson University has two departments related to this area in the

College of Agriculture: the Food Science Dept. and the Packaging Science Dept.

I see a need to further emphasize what we are doing in Horticulture-including ornamental horticulture, floriculture, nursery management, turf management, golf course management and other areas.

I see a need to continue our emphasis in entrepreneurship, management, sales and salesmanship, and leadership development, both personal and community. The changing nature of society, work and people requires us to address current issues of fundamental concern such as animal rights, wetland preservation, resource usage, and others. Pat Earle recently represented SC at the national ag issues curriculum workshop. He will be sharing this information with other teachers through workshops.

If your program is teaching primarily production agriculture, I would suggest your program is not preparing your students for the majority of the positions available. Making the connections with agribusiness leaders will soon

applied approach to teaching, which is much of what educational reform today is trying to accomplish. Elsewhere, I've found that when we "content analyze" our curricula in ag ed, if it's up-to-date, we are already teaching a lot of science, math, and communication skills.

In late March, SC, along with nine other states will be undergoing an intense evaluation to see if its occupational efforts are in line with Tech Prep goals. Ag ed will be getting close scrutiny, and as you know, The Carl Perkins Act pays much of the bill for our programs. Now is the time for us to begin working more closely with the Tech Colleges to articulate our programs; and to develop relationships with the academic teachers in our schools.

Close connections with the ag industry may lead us to the conclusion that we need to be more flexible and creative in our program and curricula planning. Industry doesn't have the luxury of waiting five or six years to make a necessary change to remain competitive. We don't either! We may have to forget our traditional concept of

ists anywhere in the country—think of what that would do for your image as the ag expert in your community when Johnny or Susie goes home and tells mom and dad and friends—"guess what happened in ag class today? We were studying about the impact of soil erosion on water quality and how it effects fish production and my ag teacher called Mr. EPA in Washington, DC and he talked to us and we got to ask him questions, and he invited us to visit his office someday. It was really neat!"

I believe you need a multimedia computer and modem in your classroom so you can make the connections with a variety of data networks. An article in Technology and Learning begins with the statement: "Every future scenario for our information society projects a world linked entirely by telecommunications, a world in which teachers and students interact daily with vast amounts of data—text, sound, and video images..."

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Professionally, the potential uses are

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If your program is teaching primarily production agriculture, I would suggest your program is not preparing your students for the majority of the positions available. Making the connections with agribusiness leaders will soon bring us to the conclusion that we can't develop a lesson plan once and use it from now on. We realize that we must always be looking for new sources of current information. And it means relying more and more on other people and therefore getting connected to the right sources.

Frank Sandifer is leading a team effort to closely examine the current ag curricula identifying its strengths, its weaknesses, what is being taught that can no longer be justified, what should be taught that isn't, who we need to make connections with including Tech Prep, and Apprenticeship programs, and to list in priority order what needs to be done.

The Carl Perkins Act makes Tech Prep THE approach states are to take in delivering occupational and academic education. Every state is quickly moving to develop their Tech Prep models— and we want to make sure agriculture is a part of that model. With or without Tech Prep we should be doing what it calls for anyway, and that's articulating our programs with post-secondary programs and with the academic content areas. We in ag ed have a lot to offer Tech Prep. A recent letter from Dr. Nielsen acknowledges that ag ed has always taken an applied approach to teaching, which is much of what educational reform today is trying to accomplish. Elsewhere, I've found that when we "content analyze" our curricula in ag ed, if it's up-to-date, we are already teaching a lot of science, math, and communication skills.

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Close connections with the ag industry may lead us to the conclusion that we need to be more flexible and creative in our program and curricula planning. Industry doesn't have the luxury of waiting five or six years to make a necessary change to remain competitive. We don't either! We may have to forget our traditional concept of a textbook and rely more on current industry periodicals, professional journals and newsletters. We should take a close look at the new curricula packages recently developed by the National Ag Ed Council in close cooperation with industry representatives. As a taxpayer, I don't believe we should spend SC money to redevelop something already available— and that's of high quality— and represents the current thinking of people in the field.

To stay current, I believe you need to bring more guest speakers into your classroom— either in person or by conference call or satellite connections. I recently completed teaching a course on a Visual TeleConferencing System. Every student was at a remote site somewhere throughout the state. We had two-way audio and visual communication as I was teaching. I tapped into the technical expertise of a variety of experts from across the country by involving them as guest speakers using the communications system. You need to be doing the same thing.

A THIRD paradigm shift then deals with modern communication technology. We need to upgrade our classrooms so you can access the expertise of specialists anywhere in the country—think of what that would do for your image as the ag expert in your community when Johnny or Susie goes home and tells mom and dad and friends—"guess what happened in ag class today? We were studying about the impact of soil erosion on water quality and how it effects fish production and my ag teacher called Mr. EPA in Washington, DC and he talked to us and we got to ask him questions, and he invited us to visit his office someday. It was really neat!"

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When making the connections with agribusiness leaders, if we are to be perceived as professionals and leaders in agricultural education, we must communicate in the same professional manner using a similar level of sophisticated technology. To do otherwise is to invite criticism and negative publicity.

El Paso Community College has developed the Rio Grande FreeNet online computer system which is open to students, educators and others interested in communicating with each other and with research databanks throughout the country. And it's free of charge. When business and community leaders can sit down at a computer and send us a brief update,— or respond quickly, informally, and easily to our inquiry,— such as through a network,— they are much more likely to take us seriously. What a great way to get community and parental involvement in our program.

Closer to home— here in South Carolina—the science and math teachers have been attending workshops to begin using PSINET (People Sharing Information Net) which focuses on exchanging information in science and math. A teacher calls a toll-free number at SDE to access the network, finds the information he/she needs, then downloads curriculum and lesson plans to his/her local computer.

Professionally, the potential uses are

wide open. Such connections provide you with an easy way to share curricula, lesson plans and other information in a matter of seconds. If you're planning to teach a new course, or unit of instruction, check the network to see who is already teaching the same thing and request their lesson plans and outlines as a starting point. Again, I don't believe we have the luxury of wasting time or money in re-developing something that's already available. I'd like to see all of us using electronic mail to communicate the latest information and help put the post office out of business! Your SCVATA newsletter and information from SDE could be sent in a matter of seconds to each of you...

I believe our ag classroom computers need interactive multimedia capabili ties with CD Rom and perhaps genera tion III laser components. Across the country, use of multimedia in classrooms is skyrocketing. The CD-rom use rate increased 93% last year. This capability in your classroom will allow your students to access data from the USDA National Agr Library. The Library has a contract with Silver Platter which makes available over three million agricultural articles. A subscription to this service provides you with disks that are updated quarterly.

Many of your students are already using interactive video and computer technology either at home or at the video arcade. They'd think you had arrived if you had a classroom equipped this way. The potential for what you and your students could do with such a resource in your classroom is limited only by your imagination!

I believe you need to take advantage of programs broadcast over satellite by downloading them, editing them for what's relevant to you and your students and teaching from them. The SDE Curriculum Framework Impact Statement says distance learning is one means of equitably delivering instruction in certain areas. Land Grant Universities are now sharing specialized courses via satellite. Satellite dishes are scheduled to be installed in every middle and secondary school in South Carolina; and telecomputing networks are scheduled to be implemented. South Carolina ETV will have the capability to broadcast 20 programs simultaneously. Will any of them be about agriculture? That depends on you and me. Dan Poston is leading a Team effort on Technology and equipment. His team will be addressing the same questions as the other teams but specifically with regard to Technology and Equipment.

But introducing modern technology alone isn't enough. And consequently a FOURTH paradigm shift is needed. To stay up-to-date you need new kinds of inservice training and professional development opportunities. Not in the traditional content areas, but rather to learn how to effectively use these communication resources in your classrooms; and to develop new techniques of teaching and relating to your students. I hope that we can make the connections and develop a partnership with Clemson University, business and industry, and the State Dept. of Education that will make these opportunities available. Willie Capehart is leading a Team addressing your needs in inservice and professional development.

Yet a FIFTH paradigm shift in our thinking is in the area of resource development— and the sharing of resources. Many of the ideas I'm proposing do have a price tag. But that's only a challenge, not a problem. We need to look for alternative funding options and sources. For instance, a subscription to Silver-Platter normally costs $800.00. They have agreed to reduce the cost to $400.00 if we have a certain number of subscriptions. A 50% savings occurred with one phone call.

My point is, don't hesitate to work for the best deal possible. There may be a local agribusiness who would be willing to buy the subscription for your program— or there may be a large statewide agribusiness willing to buy a subscription for every ag department in the state—that would be only about $40,000 (about the cost of keeping three inmates incarcerated in SC prisons for one year).

Let me share a couple of examples: When I was teaching high school ag ed, I noticed an obscure paragraph in some publication stating that Ford Tractor Co. would provide a new Ford tractor power train free of charge to local ag programs. All I had to do was make a phone call, fill out a form and a multithousand dollar piece of equipment was delivered free.

I needed transportation to visit my students' supervised ag experience projects, and as a 22-year-old, my own car wasn't in very good shape. I went to the local car dealers in town and asked if they would be interested in loaning a pickup truck to the ag program. The Ford dealer said they didn't have a truck available, but he would loan a new Galaxy 500 sedan if we could use it. I said we can use it. I had a new car every year for the next three years provided free for official business. Many ag teachers involve their local advisory council and FFA Alumni and Young Farmers organizations in securing resources. A local grain elevator may well see good reason to pay for a phone line and access to the commodity markets for your program.

I've found in the past that more people have expressed support for my programs than I was able to involve. The key is to have a want list already made up and when someone says—how can I help—you're ready with an answer. You can apply for state funds through the EIA grant process and perhaps other program initiatives.

With regard to resource sharing, we need to build partnerships with other faculty in the school. We need to develop ways of sharing students, expertise, and equipment with the biology teacher and chemistry teacher and others. If the biology teacher has a $10,000 piece of equipment that teaches certain concepts we also touch upon, why not arrange to exchange students, or classrooms for a period or two.

All kinds of ways of enhancing resource use can be developed with a little creativity. The Tech Prep initiative provides many opportunities for ag education to work closely with academic teachers and fellow occupational teachers, both at the secondary and post-secondary level. The coordinator of state apprenticeship programs has asked us to identify teachers interested in developing model sites. Both Agriculture and Home Economics are concerned with food science and technology. We need to design new ways of team teaching and sharing our expertise with each other. We need to make the connections in our own schools.

The SIXTH and last paradigm shift I'll mention is your perception of your

role as an ag teacher.

You are a leader in the agricultural community,— you are a change agent. You can be perceived as visionary and your program on the cutting edge, or you can be perceived as out of touch and irrelevant by your clients and customers.

Paul Hersey in The Situational Leader says: "Leadership is...about accomplishing tasks and reaching goals through the efforts of other people. Effective leaders make things happen. They don't sit around watching other people and waiting to react to whatever situations occur. They know what ought to happen, plan a way to make it happen, and take steps to see that it does!" That's why it's important that you understand your mission and have a vision.

A simple definition of leadership is the ability to influence others to work to accomplish goals.

Edward R. Murrow said: "To be persuasive, we must be believable; to be believable, we must be credible; to be credible, we must be truthful.": Leaders have the responsibility to communicate clearly and effectively with others about them. And need to be "connected" in order to be effective. Connected with your subject matter, your industry base, your community, your clients, your customers,...

Robert Greenleaf in "The Servant as Leader" says: "The real enemy is fuzzy thinking on the part of good, intelligent, vital people, and their failure to lead...too many settle for being critics and experts." A well defined mission and vision leaves no room for fuzzy thinking.

In offering advice to leaders, Peter Drucker says; "There is nothing as useless as doing efficiently that which should not be done at all." This implies you must be identifying real needs, setting priorities, evaluating efforts in light of the vision and mission. Being willing to let go when something is no longer relevant and being willing to do something new and different.

You are the visual image of your program to your students, parents, administrators, school board, and to the customers of your product. You breathe life and excitement and energy into your program. Is your program perceived by others as exciting, dynamic, state of the art, technically up-to-date? Or is it perceived to be about as useful as last months newspaper? You are the embodiment of your program in the eyes of your potential clients (students)—those little 7th and 8th and 9th graders who are struggling with big decisions to make. Are you enthusiastically sharing your vision with them?

James Austin in his book, Chase, Chance and Creativity says: "Enthusiasm is the elixir that pervades creativity, inspires it, frees it so that anything seems possible, and enlists others in the cause." Enthusiasm sets the climate for creativity and innovation. Being willing to try different techniques, methods, approaches. To forget about business as usual and begin seeing the world through a different lens. If it works, use it. It it isn't working, try something else.

Linda Proctor of Phoenix, AZ says she is always looking for ways to make learning fun - always watching for ways to intrigue the students. She says, "once you've lit the fire for learning, there's no stopping it." She makes the connection with her students.

Frank Saldana of Rio Hondo, Texas says parents play a key role. He says, "As an ag teacher, I have the best job in the whole school. When I visit my students at home or where they work, I meet their parents and find out what's really happening in their lives. I get to watch the students develop for four years. It's more of a one-on-one relationship. That's what makes it work, and it's what's missing in academics." He makes the connection with parents.

Saldana says "All it takes is one student to set the rest on fire. The kids make it happen by getting involved. I give them a challenge at the beginning of the year,..."

Other teams of teachers currently taking a fresh look at various aspects of agricultural education in South Carolina include:

Fred Raines
PRE-SERVICE & CERTIFICATION

Greg Vaught
12-MONTH AG PROGRAMS

Paul Jones
RECRUITMENT

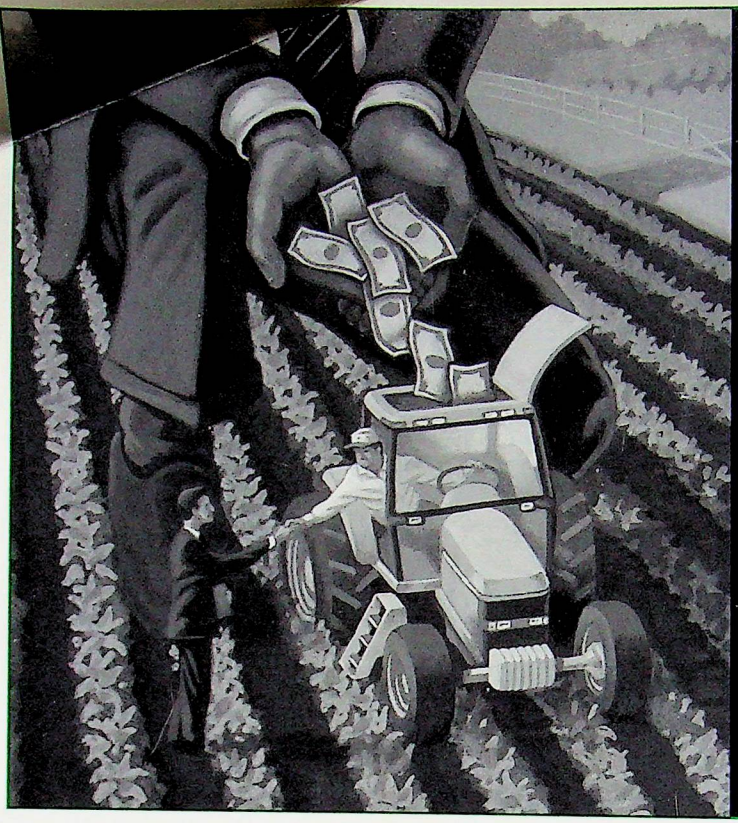
Jerry Pace
IMAGE AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

In addition, the FFA Advisory Council has appointed an FFA Convention Task Force to begin an in depth review and planning for the 1994 convention. And The Council has appointed an FFA Camp Task Force to look at programming, facilities, scheduling, staffing, etc. I realize these and other changes often cause us a great deal of anxiety. But these are exciting, challenging times in which we live, and I believe ag ed can be a part of them.

Wendell Berry in The Unforeseen Wilderness says: "Always in the big woods when you leave familiar ground and step off alone in a new place there will be, along with the feelings of curiosity and excitement, a little nagging of dread. It's ancient fear of the Unknown, and it's your first bond with the wilderness you are going into. What you are doing is exploring." By the vary nature of the career we've chosen, we have the opportunity to explore the big woods (agriculture and education) every day—and we can identify with the feelings expressed by Mr. Berry.

I have high expectations for agricultural education in South Carolina. High expectations in the areas of student learning and performance in our ag programs; high expectations for teacher preparation and performance (skills, methodology, technical content, dual certification,); high expectations for the curricula and courses that are being taught in ag ed (ag science, food science, environmental and natural resources, wildlife and outdoor recreation, leadership): high expectations for use of technology (computers, cd rom, networks, multimedia, e-mail, laser discs, satellite); and high expectations for what we can do together.

In closing, I want to encourage you to go exploring in the big woods, to nourish your enthusiasm and fan your flame of creativity so you can have the best possible ag ed program...



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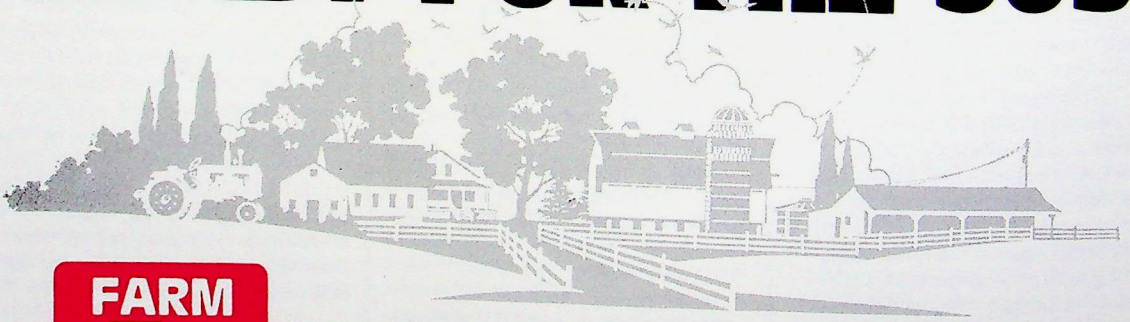

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